

All City Employees Can Be SMART!

A city sanitation driver noticed an elderly couple was having a difficult time getting out of their home to get to a waiting taxi. The elderly woman couldn't get her husband and his wheel chair out the door and down the steps. A meter reader notices a house has fallen into disrepair, the yard is overgrown and filling up with junk. Neighbors complain about a house that looks like it is overflowing with belongings and uncared for. Family members report a dangerous situation or unlawful activity in the home of a relative. Problems like these have been brought to solution through the multi-departmental collaboration of the city's Specialty Multi-Agency Response Team (SMART) Team.

Created in 1995 by the Torrance Police Department Community Lead Office Detail, the team is coordinated today by Rochelle Maurer, Fire Prevention Specialist for Torrance Fire Department and Fran Fulton, Economic Development Manager. "Once we have identified a property in trouble we go to the home owner, often an elderly citizen, and calm their fears, get them past any embarrassment and help them to visualize our assistance as temporary scaffolding to support the building, which comes down when our work is done," explained Maurer. "We emphasize the benefits of accepting our help, they usually go for it when they find out it won't cost them anything," she said. Sometimes, team members stay in touch with these folks who are frequently completely on their own.

Circumstances are not always that simple; mental illness, child or elder abuse, hoarding, drug use and sales or other unlawful activities are all elements that have been encountered. Most often, it is elderly owners who have simply become unable to maintain their property either due to physical frailty or poverty. Team representatives usually take "Focal Point on Aging", a service directory prepared by city staff, to their meetings with the seniors. "It's a great resource," says Maurer, "It lists services from A to Z like attorneys, advocacy, and volunteering."

SMART can improve the quality of life in a neighborhood by eliminating traffic hazards like overgrown landscaping that blocks visibility for drivers and graffiti abatement on public and private property. It took a concerted effort on the part of Public Works, Torrance Police, Graffiti Abatement, Community Development and Torrance School District to find the solution to constantly renewed graffiti in a long, open



Before

Traffic hazard corrected

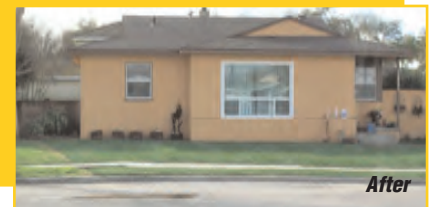


After



Before

The look and feel of the neighborhood has brightened



After

concrete drainage ditch between South High and Calle Mayor Middle School. "This project showed us that our greatest resource is the teamwork we can muster with the whole city," said Cyndy Rosell, Permit Technician for Community Development and SMART Recording Secretary.

Representatives from most city departments sit in on monthly meetings. "The City Manager, LeRoy J. Jackson,

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2012 Service Awards Luncheon

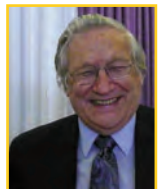
Human Resources Service Awards coordinators got great cooperation from the weather on a sunny Thursday in late March. The barbeque buffet was a big hit with employees who had celebrated 5-year (incremental) anniversaries with the city in 2011. Terrific door prizes were won, folks got to spend a little quality time with fellow employees over delicious plates of barbeque and everyone went back to work happy.

These lucky folks won gift certificates in the door prize drawings: Gary Carter(35), Viet Hoang(10), Timothy McAtee(25), Mark Hassoldt(5), Steve Robinson(25), Grand Prize Winner -Kimberly Glapion(10) -won a Flat Screen TV!



More Service Awards Pictures on Page 6

The crowd gave a raucous standing ovation for City Manager, LeRoy J. Jackson, celebrating 45 years with the city



REVIEW TORRANCE ADVANTAGE AWARDS

On Wednesday, April 4, 2012 The Office of Economic Development hosted the 5th annual Torrance Advantage Awards. Award recipients were recognized for their economic development strategies of local significance for the year 2011. Awards were presented to small and large companies in each category. Recipients received a trophy, \$200 to help with operating expenses, a letter of recognition from Mayor Scotto, and certificates of commendation from regional elected officials. **I•B**



Awards were presented in the following categories:

Long-Term Investor

Joey Ikemoto Photography Inc.
American Honda Motor Co.

Quality of Life Community Investor

Old Torrance Coffee & Tea
Torrance-South Bay YMCA

People to People

BabyCakes Baking Company
Kelly Services, Inc.

Enriching the Community

Torrance Travelodge
Continental Development Corporation

CALENDAR

**City of Torrance
City Yard Open House
and Car Show**

With the Disaster
Preparedness Expo and
Environmental Fair
Saturday, June 9, 2012
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Armed Forces Day Parade

May 19, 2012 – 1:00 p.m.
Torrance Boulevard
from Arlington Avenue to
Madrona Avenue

Moments in Torrance History – Annexing Our Neighbors

*By: Michael George, Reference Librarian
Torrance Public Library*



Almost fifty years ago Torrance annexed its last major piece of unincorporated county land. Some annexations went more smoothly than others. Walteria took a couple of attempts before it joined the city in 1928. The McDonald Tract (what is now most of North Torrance above 190th) came into the city by only three votes. Of course, in 1930 the McDonald Tract (2750 acres) had all of 139 registered voters. Some of the big issues were taxes, Torrance had the second lowest municipal tax rate in the county, The Hollywood-Palos Verdes Parkway (imagine the Arroyo Seco running down Crenshaw) and the how to get out of paying the Alondra Park assessment.

Torrance Transit Apprentice Program

Four novice drivers comprise the second class to train in Torrance Transit's Apprentice Relief Bus Operator Program. Seven weeks into their 10-week training program, the trainees began with a visit to the DMV to get a learner's permit for the Class B license that will allow them to legally operate one of the department's new, compressed natural gas powered, 40 foot long buses. Chosen for their customer service aptitudes and clean driving records, none of the four had any prior bus driving experience. "We recruit people with good work ethics, a history of great customer service and reliability. Once on board, the apprenticeship is on-the-job training for bus operator skills," said Kelli Lee, Senior Human Resources Analyst who works on the recruitment team with Transit to develop new drivers.

Dana Rush, Transit's Acting Operations Manager has high expectations for the graduates of the program, "We are committed to provide reliable, safe, inexpensive

and courteous transportation to our customers and we expect our drivers to live up to that commitment," she said. Before they take the wheel in a passenger occupied bus, the apprentices spend 80 plus hours with Transit supervisors learning parts of the bus, driving theory and finally practicing basic maneuvers in the City Yard. They also ride along with experienced drivers, learning the eight routes and watching the expert full-timers do the job.

"There is never a dull moment for a Bus Operator," said Rhonda Cleveland, a longtime Transit employee, now a Supervisor and Trainer. "Everyone has their passenger stories, you learn to diffuse problems, not take anything personally, and come back the next day to do it all over again." "Safety is the number one priority along with the 'Five Keys' that have been etched into the memories of the apprentices," said Melanie Hearn, Transit Supervisor. The apprentices agree, along with the opportunity to help people, one of the biggest attractions of the job is the prospect of a different experience on every shift. "It's interesting and fun," said Keyonna Horton. "As a former regular bus passenger, I look forward to passing on the help and kindness that I was shown," said Roberto Calderon.

The program's diploma is the commercial license the apprentices must acquire by passing the written and practical exam at the DMV. Then they will begin to drive as Apprentice Relief Bus Operators on a part-time, as-needed basis. The goal is for them to transition

through the career path of Relief Bus Operator and ultimately become full-time Bus Operators by the end of the second year.

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New Employees

02/12 - 05/12

City Treasurers Office

Athena Simpson
Senior Account Clerk

Community Services

Heather Firchow
Senior Librarian

General Services

Christopher Adame
Customer Service Rep

Public Works

Vincent Villa
Jason Ridgway
Maintenance Worker

Public Works

Daniel Boykin
Sanitation Equipment Operator

Retirees

02/12 - 05/12

Name	Title	Ret Date	Years of Svc.
John Aranda	Cement Finisher	3.8.12	25
Jassen Bluto	Police Officer	3.9.12	8
Mark Hein	Police Lieutenant	1.19.12	29
Prince Williams, Jr.	Bus Operator	3.1.12	16

Promotions

02/12 - 05/12

CIT

Sunny Lai
Systems Analyst

General Services

Aaron Cortado
Facilities Service Supervisor

Conrado Contreras

Steven Jordan
Senior Mechanic

Jason Schwartz
Mechanic

Public Works

Michael Adkins
Marion Patrick
Abel Sayula
Equipment Operator

Fire

Phillip Byrne
Christopher Hocker
Fire Engineer

Public Works

Thomas Walters
Thomas Tucay
Lead Maintenance Worker

Public Works continued

Robert Fain
Maintenance Worker

Police

Keith Fournier
Lieutenant

Patrick Ghesquiere

David Maitlen
Danny Moreno

Sergeant

Public Works

Chad Hawkins
Michael Joslin
Tree Trimmer

Joshua Bendik
Sanitation Equipment Operator

Transit

Donna Appleby
Stacy Dulaney
John Goff
Bus Operator



Torrance Transit Trainers and Apprentices April 2012. Melanie Hearn (Supervisor), Keyonna Horton, Roberto A. Calderon, Stacy Leal, Nathaniel Bernas, Rhonda Cleveland (Supervisor).

City Departments Team Up to Improve Water Quality at Madrona Marsh

City Council, Public Works, City Manager, City Attorney departments, Chevron, Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission, Bio-Clean Wetland Treatment Systems and Nature Center Manager, Tracy Drake are all members of the team responsible for the latest triumph in the ongoing effort to preserve and protect one of the last urban wetlands anywhere, Madrona Marsh.



More than 100 retractable curb gates have been installed in the surrounding area to keep trash out of the catch basins that drain into the Marsh. Trash provides a friendly environment for non-beneficial bacteria. Different style screens and curb grates were tested over a 2 year period.



A filter was installed across the main inlet into the sump. Inside the metal frame is a material that resembles white cotton socks that filter out solids and gunk. The water from this sump can end up in Machado Lake. "Cutting edge technologies were employed in the project that address new rules imposed by the Regional Water Quality Control Boards as the work progressed," said Jeff Kidd.

Work at Madrona Marsh to improve the water quality is funded with a grant from the state. The SW corner of the site, vacant for 17 years, was donated to the city by Chevron. Many people had worked on the acquisition over the years and finally Shelly Luce, Director of the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission and John Dettle, Public Works Engineering Manager, sealed the deal. Work started in 2000 to design a water treatment system to be located on the SW corner to treat urban and storm water runoff before it entered the Marsh. That design had to be revised due to the discovery by the Public Works Sanitation crews that a large piece of linoleum lodged in the storm drain pipe had skewed the data.

The treatment field is on the east side of the marsh just north of the sump. It is about one hundred twenty feet long and forty feet wide dug six feet deep and filled with lava rock gravel. Soil excavated from the field was used to build up the roads inside the marsh. The concrete subterranean vault houses the filters for the distribution pipes. The pipes sticking up out of the ground are clean-outs for the distribution pipes. The field is planted with native plants that will eventually help to anchor the gravel and absorb unwanted nutrients as their roots spread. Water is pumped up out of the sump, through underground pipes to the filter field and then eventually finds its way to the riprap waterfall and back down into the sump to be pumped into the Marsh when needed.



Phase 1, Engineering Manager, John Dettle, did the final re-design and oversaw the project. Clarke Contracting constructed the project and Sanitation Supervisor, Tom Cook lent a hand and Concrete Supervisor Marco Gonzales and the concrete crew were essential in keeping the project within budget. "The project improves the water quality, benefits the wildlife in the wetlands and complies with the regulations that came our way," said John Dettle.



The first phase of the project was completed in February 2012; new pumps and a concrete housing for them were installed in the sump. Rusty pipes and electrical conduit were replaced, and a new control board installed at the top of the sump. Non-indigenous trees were removed from around the main inlet and replaced with indigenous saplings. Phase 2 will begin this summer dredging three feet of sediment out of the sump, expanding the wetlands at the SW corner and constructing a small detention basin at the main drain from the residential area to the south. The City has applied for a grant from Long Beach Conservation Corps to help with Phase 2.



A grouted riprap (big rocks piled together) waterfall and swale were constructed to aerate the water as it returns to the sump from the treatment field. Gravity pulls the water out of the treatment field and down the waterfall to raise the oxygen levels in the sump water.

Public Works Associate Engineer, Jeff Kidd (left) was Project Engineer for



Tracy Drake can now control the water flow into the Marsh. She explained that runoff from the surrounding residential, commercial and industrial developments increased the nutrients in the water causing rapid algal growth in the marsh called hypoxia – insufficient dissolved oxygen. This imbalance caused plants to grow too fast in the marsh; they became overgrown and weak and died too soon. This, in turn, created less food for the invertebrates (insects), the bottom of the food chain. Fewer bugs meant less food for birds, fewer birds mean less food for their natural predators and so on. Indigenous plant species were being lost as well. Cleaner water creates a healthier habitat at every level of the food chain.

Torrance TRIVIA

Winter 2012 Question:

Del Amo Blvd. will soon run the length of Torrance. A local newspaper stated, "When the development program is completed, Del Amo [Blvd.] will be a thoroughfare of at least four lanes extending from the South Bay at Redondo Beach through the heart of Torrance's industrial section ..."

What decade did this statement appear?

1940s, 1950s, 1970s, 1980s or 2010s

Answer: The decade the article appeared in was the 1950s.

It was in the TORRANCE PRESS, Thursday, April 1, 1954 edition on page 2. (This resource is available online!) The sole correct response came from, **DarLynn Nemitz**.

New Question

Which of the following communities was not considered for annexing by the City of Torrance?

- A. Lomita
- B. El Camino Village/Alondra Park
- C. Rolling Hills
- D. Redondo Beach
- E. We wanted them all

Please email your answers to: **JanetStancliff3@gmail.com**

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Submit all game responses, employee news and calendar items to: JanetStancliff3@gmail.com

All City Employees Can Be SMART! continued



Removed trash and other debris, crew painted exterior of home



supported us from the beginning. We have always had City Manager staff on the team and Mr. Jackson requested funds to be allocated for the creation of the Community Home Improvement Program (CHIP) to help keep up the high quality of Torrance neighborhoods," said Fulton.

SMART utilizes a wide range of resources starting with its own CHIP and the city's Home Improvement Program (HIP), LA County Health Department, Homeless and Senior advocacy organizations, independent contractors like shopping cart return services and graffiti removal.

"A lot of City employees don't know about SMART, so they don't know about the resources available or that anyone can submit a problem property," said Cyndy Rosell. The team's email address is, smart@torranceca.gov.

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2012 Service Awards Luncheon continued



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